



Australian Home Beautiful November, 2018

Page: 198
Section: General News
Region: National, AU
Circulation: 82339
Type: Magazines Lifestyle
Size: 2,345.00 sq.cms.



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BEFORE



TEXTURAL WARMTH The room's palette of materials was inspired by an image homeowner Simon found on Pinterest of a moody timber kitchen with a mid-century feel. "I always knew I was going to use dark timber as it has warmth and creates a cocooning effect," he says. The rich tones of wide European oak floorboards in Boston from Carpet Court were teamed with Freedom Kitchens veneer door fronts in Florentine Walnut, which form a feature wall and conceal integrated appliances (above). Timber-topped 'Tube' stools from Habitat complete the rich tactile look. >



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For keen surfer Simon and his wife Jazmin, it was the incredible views and proximity to the ocean on Sydney's northern beaches which prompted them to purchase a renovators' delight a little over a year ago. "We bought a 1970s double flat with the intention of converting it into a large modern home," says project manager Simon, who conceived the redesign, managed the whole project and worked on site daily helping out their trades. In the kitchen, dated finishes were ditched in favour of warm, timeless materials, with the layout reorientated to maximise the outlook and sense of connection with the home's living spaces. Each morning Simon loves to check out the surf conditions from the expansive window while making a coffee. "We've improved the kitchen's looks and functionality," he says. "It's now a joy to cook in while looking out to the ocean."

Original room: An enclosed, boxy, 1980s-style kitchen with a terracotta-tiled floor, laminate benchtops, high-gloss cream laminate cabinetry and black aluminium windows.

Time frame: Four months from design to completion.

Why the makeover? To modernise the entire house and open up the kitchen to the dining and living area.

The works: The kitchen was completely gutted and reconfigured so it flowed into the adjoining living and dining space. Dated finishes and appliances were upgraded with a timeless palette of materials, including cabinetry from Freedom Kitchens and sleek integrated appliances from Fisher & Paykel.

Major changes: An existing window was removed so a wall of cabinetry and appliances could run along the home's north-facing side. This allowed for creation of a peninsula bench that doubles as an informal dining option. Stacking glass doors were added to link the zone with a newly created outdoor area.

Lessons learned: "Using integrated appliances within the cabinetry gives a clean look, but we've found the main benefit is the extra space it has freed up on the benches for cooking and entertaining," says Simon.



"WE WANTED IT TO LOOK LIKE A *designer* SPACE YET FUNCTION AS A FAMILY KITCHEN" – SIMON, HOMEOWNER

VISUAL SPACE MAKER Glass is super effective in enhancing the sense of space in this renovation. Dated black aluminium window frames were replaced with longer panes of glass and new cedar trims painted in Dulux half-strength Lexicon, providing a fresh coastal look. The addition of stacking glass doors opened the space to the alfresco area (top left). "Because the glass doors create such a seamless indoor-outdoor flow, the kitchen feels like it has doubled in space," says Simon.

RETRO INSPIRED Looking to add some light relief and break up the dark timber flooring and cabinetry, Simon knew he'd found just the right splashback tile when he spotted 'Crayons' in Bianco from Naturally Tiles (left). "I guess I gravitate towards a modernist '70s California look and I thought the shape would create a nice feature," he explains. Rather than gloss, a matt finish helps tone down the zone's reflective surfaces. With a mix of cabinetry in walnut veneer and grey melamine, 'Ealing' handles in Brushed Orb from Kethy were a wonderful way to link the two colours. The bronze of the handles picks up the rich brown tones of the timber, with the subtle sheen adding sophistication to the matt grey.



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MAGIC MAKEOVERS
 2018



Go bespoke to maximise storage in your kitchen, with purpose-built appliance cabinetry. Design shelf and drawer space to perfectly fit your utensils, gadgets and devices - and keep them in an orderly fashion.

budget BREAKDOWN

APPLIANCES	\$15,000
BAR STOOLS	\$740
BENCHTOP	\$4300
BI-FOLD DOORS	\$3000
FLOORING	\$1500
HANDLES	\$300
JOINERY	\$15,000
LABOUR	\$8000
LIGHTING	\$500
SINK	\$500
SPLASHBACK	\$300
TAPWARE	\$500
WINDOWS	\$2000

TOTAL \$51,640*

SOURCE BOOK

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:
 Right Foot Fwd. 0415 515 469
 KITCHEN CABINETRY:
 Freedom Kitchens, 1800 113 733.
freedomkitchens.com.au
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WALL POWER

When opening up a kitchen, it may seem counter-intuitive to enclose a window, particularly when it has a view. However, the payoff here was threefold. "By filling in the window, we gained a wall of storage [top] and could orientate the kitchen so it overlooked the living area," says Simon. It also allowed for a large peninsula bench - topped in Silestone quartz in Cygnus - which Jazmin (pictured) and Simon use for informal dining and entertaining.



EASY ORGANISATION

Shallow cutlery/utensil drawers from Freedom Kitchens (above) feature adjustable sections, which allowed Simon to tailor the length and width of compartments to maximise storage and functionality. Hettich soft-close hinges mean they glide smoothly and quietly.



FAB FUNCTIONALITY

Simon and Jazmin love the look of integrated appliances (above) and the convenience of the Fisher & Paykel 'Double DishDrawer' (top). "The drawers are easier on the back to stack. And you can run small loads when you need to keep the benchtop clear," says Simon.

designer's TIP

Research is key to a successful project, says Simon. "I like to create a moodboard that reflects my vision and can be shown to suppliers and trades so they know what we're working towards," he says. It's also important to be confident in your choices. "During the building phase, people may try and convince you to compromise or change things because of time or cost, but don't deviate from your vision," he says. "Go with your gut and get the result you set out to achieve."